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July 6, 2000

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W. – Room TWB-204
Washington, D.C. 20554

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JUL 6 2000

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Re: Written Ex parte – CC Docket No. 90-571

Dear Ms. Salas:

Attached is the Coin Sent Paid Industry Team's annual report. This report summarizes this team's work efforts and conclusions regarding the Alternative Plan for Coin Sent Paid TRS calling from payphones.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. DelCasino", written over a horizontal line.

Michael F. DelCasino
Co-Chair – CSP Industry Team

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Nelson", written over a horizontal line.

Linda Nelson
Co-Chair – CSP Industry Team

cc: Chuck Keller
Karen Strauss
Helene Nankin
Debra Sabourin
Staci Pies

Attachment

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**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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In the Matter of)	
)	
In the Matter of Telecommunications)	
Relay Services, and the Americans with)	CC Docket No. 90-571
Disabilities Act of 1990)	

REPORT OF COIN SENT-PAID INDUSTRY TEAM

I. Summary

As part of its ongoing effort to educate consumers about the availability of an alternative method of placing TTY coin sent-paid calls from payphones to relay centers, AT&T, GTE and Bell Atlantic (now d/b/a Verizon Communications), Sprint, WorldCom, BellSouth, SBC, American Public Communications Council, Inc., GCI, Hamilton Telephone, U S West, Vista IT ("Industry Team"), hereby report the outcome of a recent inquiry about the technical and economic feasibility of coin-sent paid (CSP) calls from payphones, and its education efforts since its previous report in December 1998.

The Commission has acknowledged since 1997 that coin sent-paid dialing from payphones to relay centers is not technically feasible and does not even provide a functionally equivalent service for persons with speech and hearing disabilities. Instead, the Commission has relied on the Alternative Plan based on non-coin sent-paid payment methods for toll calling through relay centers. The Commission has heretofore refrained from substituting the Alternative Plan for its coin sent-paid requirements, in the expectation that a new technical solution would eventually develop to make coin sent-paid calling through relay centers feasible. The Industry Team has

recently investigated whether new technical solutions are available, and reports that none are available. Switch and payphone developers have not identified a solution that would provide cost-effective service quality, especially for a medium that continues to experience declines in revenue.

The Industry Team has complied with all outreach requirements designed by the Commission to ensure consumers are aware of the Alternative Plan. The Industry Team continues to regularly solicit input and suggestions to improve its outreach efforts from representatives of consumer organizations, and has incorporated their suggestions into its educational efforts. The Industry Team has engaged in a wide variety of education efforts, including attending local, regional, and national meetings of persons with disabilities, bill inserts, articles, and advertisements in a variety of TRS and disability publications. The Industry Team has also used a variety of education materials, including videos, live demonstrations, wallet-sized cards, and letters. The Industry Team efforts have reached a wide audience, and have successfully educated consumers about the Alternative Plan. The history and extent of these efforts are documented in the text below and the accompanying exhibits.

Persons with speech and hearing disabilities have also been educated about the availability of non-coin toll calling away from home by the advertising and rapid growth of prepaid calling, prepaid wireless, wireless presubscribed services, and dial-around dialing. Coin sent-paid toll calling from payphones accounts for less than 3% of toll calls among the general population. Even if persons with speech and hearing disabilities are not aware of the Alternative Plan, they are aware of non-coin methods of paying for toll calls away from home. The additional education about the Alternative Plan that will occur if the Commission establishes a nationally funded TRS outreach campaign (an action supported by Industry Team companies), along with a continuation

of the education activities currently undertaken by the members of the Industry Team, should finalize existing efforts and prepare those few persons with disabilities that are unaware of either the Alternative Plan or of the availability of non-coin calling services away from home, to use non-coin methods of reaching a relay center away from home. Making the Alternative Plan permanent will also improve outreach efficacy. Carriers will be more willing to make permanent investments in outreach, such as placing educational materials in directories, once they know the Alternative Plan is permanent. National outreach campaigns will also benefit from a stable message by being able to continually enforce the same message.

For these reasons, the Industry Team believes the Alternative Plan provides the most technically feasible method of placing calls through relay centers that is most functionally equivalent to calls the general population would place away from home. The Industry Team therefore requests the Commission to suspend its coin sent-paid requirement (§ 47 C.F.R. 64.604(a)(3)), determine that the Alternative Plan is in the public interest, and formally adopt the provisions of the Alternative Plan, either in response to this report, or as a component of the Order responding to recent comments on TRS Outreach.¹

II. Initial Order

In its initial 1993 TRS Order, the Commission declined to generally exclude coin sent-paid calls from payphones from the requirements of the ADA.² It affirmed this conclusion in its 1993 Reconsideration Order, stating that: 1) using alternate payment methods such as calling cards

¹Telecommunications Relay Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Released, March 6, 2000.

²In the Matter of Telecommunications Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Report and Order and Request for Comments, CC Docket No. 90-571, 6 FCC Rcd 4657; 1991, Released July 26, 1991, ¶ 18, fn 18.

would not be functionally equivalent,³ 2) petitioners had failed to meet the burden of proof that coin calling through TRS centers was not economically or technically feasible⁴; and 3) a general exclusion would discourage the development of coin processing technologies that would make coin calling from payphones to TRS centers technically and economically feasible.⁵

III. 1993 Suspension Order

In response to these arguments, state relay administrators filed petitions for the Commission to suspend enforcement of its CSP requirement on the grounds that technical infeasibility made timely compliance impossible. As a result, the Commission suspended enforcement of its CSP requirement until July 1995, on the premise that an economically feasible technical solution would be developed by then.⁶

In response to the Commission's direction, members of the Industry Team investigated the feasibility of a technical solution to CSP, and, after spending considerable time, money, and effort, concluded that the most promising technical solution, the coin signaling interface, would result in significant and unacceptable levels of post-dial delay, would not be compatible with both ASCII and Baudot protocols, could result in loss of single number access to TRS centers, and would be prohibitively expensive. Based on this investigation, in April 1995, these companies petitioned the

³In the Matter of Telecommunications Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Order on Reconsideration, Second Report and Order, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket No. 90-571, 8 FCC Rcd 1802; Released February 25, 1993, at ¶ 8.

⁴Id., at ¶ 9.

⁵Id., at ¶ 10.

⁶In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Order ("Suspension Order"), CC Docket No. 90-571, 8 FCC Rcd 8385; 1993, Released November 29, 1993, at ¶ 4, 6.

Commission ("Industry Team Petition") to permanently suspend enforcement of its CSP requirement, and instead adopt an alternate to CSP.⁷

IV. 1995 Alternative Plan

Responding to comments made about the Industry Team Petition, the Commission noted that all parties agreed that coin calling to relay centers was still not economically and technically feasible, two years after its Suspension Order. The Commission also agreed with this assessment. However, the Commission refrained from indefinitely suspending the enforcement of its CSP requirement, stating that it wished to allow an additional two years to evaluate the feasibility of its CSP requirement and the ability of an alternate plan to provide a functionally equivalent alternative.⁸ The "Alternative Plan" involved: 1) local TRS payphone calls to be provided free of charge; 2) toll TRS payphone calls to be chargeable to either calling cards with rates not to exceed those that would apply to a similar non-TRS call made using coin sent-paid service; and 3) an industry sponsored consumer education program to advise TRS users of these alternative payment options.

V. Initial Evaluation of Alternative Plan (1995-1997)

The Commission required carriers to file a report eighteen months after (February 1997) its Suspension Order covering the issues that would permit it to decide the final status of its CSP

⁷Petitions of: AT&T Corp. (AT&T), the Indiana Telephone Relay Access Corporation for the Hearing and Speech Impaired (InTRAC), MCI Telecommunications Corporation (MCI), the Nebraska Public Service Commission (Nebraska PSC), Sprint Corporation (Sprint), and the United States Telephone Association (USTA), and, jointly, by Ameritech, the Bell Atlantic Telephone Companies (Bell Atlantic), BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. (BellSouth), GTE Service Corporation (GTE), New England Telephone and Telegraph Company and New York Telephone Company (NYNEX), Pacific Bell and Nevada Bell (Pacific Companies), Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (SWBT), and U S West. (collectively, Bell Operating Companies or BOCs, filed April 24, 1995.

⁸In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, 10 FCC Rcd 10927; Released August 25, 1995, Memorandum Opinion and Order, at ¶17.

requirement. The issues included: 1) effectiveness of the alternative payment methods; 2) effectiveness of consumer education; 3) coordination with the TRS user community; and 4) identification of any problem areas and corrective actions taken or proposed; 5) technical feasibility of developing and implementing TRS coin sent-paid service; 6) costs of developing and implementing TRS coin sent-paid service; 7) any significant difference, in technical feasibility or cost, between the provision of TRS coin sent-paid service for local calls and the provision of such service for toll calls; 8) data on call volume and payment methods for TRS and non-TRS payphone calls, including, to the extent feasible, data on both local and long distance calls; and 9) data indicating long term trends in the demand for coin sent-paid service.⁹

The Industry Team responded to these information requirements in its 12-Month and 18-Month Reports. The Team reported that: 1) the Alternative Plan was quickly and successfully implemented; 2) it used a variety of consumer education programs; 3) it consulted with representatives of the TRS user community and incorporated their suggestions about presentation of educational materials; 4) public complaints about the Alternative Plan were *de minimus* and handled promptly; 5) there was no technical solution capable of providing functionally equivalent service; 6) the cost of the technical solution was very high and not justified by calling volumes; 7) the cost of a technical solution for local calling had substantially increased since the Bureau's Suspension Order in August 1995 due to recent decisions in the payphone and abbreviated dialing arrangements dockets; 8) free local calling was successfully implemented, toll rates for consumers using Industry Team calling cards were less than coin toll calls, and TRS centers implemented

⁹Id., at ¶ 19.

procedures to accept prepaid or debit cards issued by other companies; and 9) coin calling was a small and declining payphone payment method.¹⁰

Consumer groups and the Commission acknowledged that as of August 1997, the technical solution considered the coin signaling interface (CSI), was not a viable technology for providing coin sent-paid service.¹¹ In contrast to earlier Orders, where the Commission held out hope that a technical solution would soon materialize, the Commission now acknowledged that after 4 years, no technological solution appeared imminent.¹²

The Commission's concern about the effectiveness of the Alternative Plan was now directed exclusively to outreach efforts, especially awareness regarding the handling of toll charges under the Alternative Plan.¹³ The Commission directed the Industry Team to improve education about the Alternative Plan by implementing additional efforts that had been suggested in the Industry Team's 18-Month Report. Those additional efforts were to include: 1) working with consumers to create an outreach message that was free of advertisements for individual companies; 2) developing a consumer education letter emphasizing that toll calls made from payphones by TRS users would be less expensive than coin sent-paid toll calls; 3) sending representatives to regional and national meetings sponsored by organizations representing the hearing and speech disability community to disseminate information about the Alternative Plan, setting up booths to demonstrate the Alternative Plan; and 4) working with Consumer Action

¹⁰Eighteen Month Report of the Petitioners on Alternate Plan for Telecommunications Relay Services Coin Sent-Paid Calls, CC Docket 90-571, filed March 12, 1997.

¹¹In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Order, Released August 21, 1997, at ¶ 16.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Id.*, at ¶ 18.

Network (CAN) to determine the usefulness of an article explaining the Alternative Plan placed in newsletters of CAN-affiliated organizations.¹⁴

VI. 1997-1998 Implementation of the Alternative Plan

The Industry Team worked diligently to improve the effectiveness of education about the Alternative Plan as required by the FCC in its August 1997 Order. Its efforts were documented in a December 1998 Report to the Commission (“1998 Activity Report”).¹⁵ The Industry Team developed an objective letter explaining how to access TRS centers from payphones based on comments from representatives of the hearing and speech disability community. The Industry Team developed a wallet-sized card with pictorial instructions on how to make a relay call from a payphone, also incorporating suggestions from the disability community. The Industry Team attended national and regional meetings as directed by the Commission, established an Industry Booth to distribute the educational letter, wallet-sized cards, and demonstrate calling from a payphone to a TRS center. The Industry Team attended hundreds of regional and local meetings to disseminate and explain the educational materials. Finally, the Industry Team produced a videotape that demonstrated step-by-step procedures for making a TRS call from a payphone. The efforts of the Industry Team involved considerable effort and expense, and met all the Commission’s requirements in good faith.

VII. Second Evaluation of the Alternative Plan (1997-1998)

CAN did not contest the Industry Team’s claim that it met the Commission’s requirements as expressed in the Alternative Plan. Rather, in a December 1998 filing (“Consumer Response”) it

¹⁴Id., at ¶¶ 18, 19.

¹⁵TRS Coin Sent-Paid Industry Team Activity Report (1998 Activity Report), In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, filed December 2, 1998.

questioned whether the Industry Team did more than required by the Commission. More importantly, it faulted the “minimal” outreach efforts of the Industry Team for low awareness of rates and billing arrangements available to TRS users that call from payphones based on a survey of 106 consumers they performed.¹⁶

The Industry Team had a number of concerns with both the conduct of the survey and the interpretation of its results. First, the survey may have signaled responders to show low awareness by stating that the purpose of the survey was to “improve awareness of how to use relay services through payphone TTYs.” Second, the survey did not establish a baseline of awareness prior to the Industry Team outreach efforts that would permit one to judge the effectiveness of the Industry Team’s efforts. Third, the survey did not establish a baseline of consumer awareness for similar telecommunications awareness issues. For example, according to a national survey conducted by Consumer Federation of America and AT&T, 8 years after divestiture, only 40 percent of consumers knew they could use a 10 digit access code to place a long distance call away from home using their carrier of choice.¹⁷ Similar levels of awareness for consumers with hearing and speech disabilities are evident four years after education about the Alternative Plan began.

The Industry Team does not contend that consumers are so aware of the Alternative Plan that further education can be eliminated. But the Team does believe its efforts have substantially increased consumer awareness of the Alternative Plan. The Industry Team questions the

¹⁶See Response to the December 1, 1998 TRS Coin Sent-Paid Industry Team Activity Report by Consumer Action Network of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans (“Consumer Response”), In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, filed April 23, 1999.

¹⁷“Consumers Could Save Money on Telephone Services by Learning about Costs, Says Nationwide Test.” Business Wire, November 30, 1992.

effectiveness of continuing to focus outreach efforts primarily on the Alternative Plan. In informal conversations at many local meetings, consumers have told various Industry Team members that the stress on the Alternative Plan is repetitious. Consumers are more interested in learning about how to use newer services such as abbreviated dialing, speech-to-speech and video relay.¹⁸

The Industry Team also takes exception to the charge that it was only willing to engage in the minimum efforts required by the Commission. The Industry Team focused its education efforts first on those activities required by the Commission. It is unfair to criticize the Industry Team for making sure it was complying with the Commission's most explicit requirements. The Commission also directed the Industry Team to solicit suggestions from consumers how to improve education efforts. The Industry Team has consistently followed this general requirement as well. The Consumer Response recommended the Industry Team provide more documentation about what kind of educational activities were conducted at each outreach event, what materials were used, and how many people attended. The Industry Team has implemented these recommendations, and has been providing consumers with quarterly reports of its outreach activities in much more detail than it did in the past. Significant outreach improvement has resulted in our response to input from consumer organizations. In short, the Industry Team has consistently worked with consumer groups to meet the letter and spirit of the Commission's directives, and has not confined its education activities to the minimum required.

VIII. Summary of Recent Education Efforts, Consumer Awareness, and Feasibility of Technical Solutions

A. Technical Solution Update

¹⁸These sentiments were more formally documented by one team member, and examples are attached as Exhibit 1.

In August 1997, the Commission maintained that the coin signaling interface solution for TTY coin sent-paid calling did not appear to be technically feasible or provide functionally equivalent payphone service for persons with hearing and speech disabilities.¹⁹ In its 1998 and 1999 Orders that continued suspending enforcement of its CSP rule, the Commission continued to affirm its August 1997 finding "...that coin sent-paid services through TRS centers was still not technically feasible and that no technological solution appeared imminent."²⁰

The Industry Team has continued to monitor technical developments since 1995 to determine whether a technical solution is both technically and economically feasible, and functionally equivalent with traditional coin sent-paid payphone calls. Over the years, informal conversations with switch and payphone manufacturers and software developers have continued to confirm the absence of a technical solution.

The Industry Team recently sought to determine whether a technical solution has recently become feasible in a more formal manner. Letters were sent to leading telecommunications research and development companies, Lucent, Siemens, Nortel, Rockwell and Essential Communications, requesting quotes (RFQ) for a technical solution to TTY calls from payphones to TRS centers. The parameters for the desired technical solution were set very broadly to give respondents flexibility to devise a workable solution. The only requirement was for calls made from coin telephones to continue to be made by non-TTY users and any TTY user, either by changing existing coin signaling, or adding new technology to permit TTY users to see a TTY

¹⁹In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Order, Released August 21, 1997, at ¶ 16.

²⁰Telecommunications Relay Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Order, Released, August 10, 1998, at ¶ 3; Telecommunications Relay Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Order, Released, August 20, 1999, at ¶ 3.

message for their coin deposit requirements.²¹ Only one company, Siemens, responded to the RFQ. They confirmed they understood the technical parameters, but stated that they were unable to provide a solution. In conversations with Essential Communications, a consulting firm that polled many small telecommunications firms, the Industry Team discovered that smaller firms also had no interest in spending time developing a solution that they were convinced would be cumbersome and unfriendly to payphone customers. The recent RFQ confirms the unavailability of any technical solutions that are technically feasible and provide functionally equivalent calling to TTY users without degrading payphone calling for non-TTY users.

B. Outreach Efforts

Since its August 1997 Order, the Commission has moved away from a technical solution as a means of providing functional equivalence for payphone calling to a relay center, to improving consumer awareness of the alternate payment means of completing a payphone call to a relay center. As discussed above, the Industry Team has been in periodic contact with consumers and has regularly incorporated their suggestions to improve the effectiveness of its outreach efforts.

The latest series of suggestions came after the Industry Team submitted its "1998 Activity Report," which discussed the Industry Team's efforts to implement the Commission's August 1997 additional outreach requirements. CAN's suggestions were to: 1) better publicize and staff the Industry Team booth at regional and national conferences; 2) provide more detailed documentation of outreach efforts to include information on whether the Alternative Plan was actually discussed and demonstrated at the meeting, which educational materials were provided at

²¹All documents pertaining to the RFQ are available in Exhibit 2.

the meeting, meeting dates, and numbers of attendees; and 3) submit a budget to fund a national consumer awareness campaign for the Alternative Plan in consultation with CAN.

1. Industry Booth Efforts

The Industry Team has made continual improvements to the consumer's opportunity to receive a "hands on demonstration" on how to place a coin call, while visiting the Industry Team booth set up at regional and national conferences. The Industry Team produced a videotape that was continuously run to demonstrate how to place a call from a coin phone. An industry representative was present at the booth to answer any questions and there was a wallet-sized card as well as a one page letter providing the consumer full details on the components of the Alternative Plan. In response to further suggestions from CAN, the Industry Team has attempted to provide live demonstrations on how to place a CSP call from a working payphone. The ability to provide this additional demonstration depends on the availability of proper facilities at the meeting or convention. Industry Team members have arranged to have a payphone temporarily installed at a meeting facility in order to provide these live demonstrations.

2. Documentation Efforts

In response to the request for better documentation by CAN, the Industry Team developed a reporting form that details outreach activities. The form breaks outreach activities into four general categories; with each category providing more detailed information about materials used, dates, and numbers of attendees.²² Activity One documents meetings attended at local, regional and national levels where information was presented on the Alternative Plan. The form documents the date of the activity, whether the activity was of a local, regional, or national

²²The first report has an additional category documenting meetings with disability groups. Since these meetings overlapped with Activity One meetings in many cases, subsequent forms report four activities.

character, the name of the primary disability organization(s) to which the presentation was made, where the meeting took place, how many attended, and what demonstrations and educational materials were used. Activity Two documents direct mailings undertaken to advertise awareness of the Alternative Plan. The activity documents the mailing date, the targeted audience, and the size of the mailing. Activity Three documents articles placed in TRS publications and TRS provider newsletters, and lists the name and date of the publication. Activity Four documents outreach via newspapers, public service announcements, billing inserts and advertisements in TTY directories, and lists publication date and estimates the size of the audience reached.

Documentation has shown that the outreach efforts of the Industry Team have continued, and even increased, since the 1998 Activity Report. In that report, the Industry Team reported it attended approximately 900 regional and local meetings to educate consumers about the Alternative Plan, during the 21 months between the 18-Month Report and the 1998 Activity Report.²³ During the 9 months covered in the most recent reports, the Industry Team attended over 860 meetings. On a normalized time scale, this amounts to more than double the number of meetings. The reports also show that members of the Industry Team met with over 300,000 consumers at these meetings, an average of approximately 350 per meeting. The report shows that live demonstrations were made at over 500 of the meetings (55%), thus allaying the concern of CAN, that hands on demonstrations have been ignored at Industry Team outreach activities. The report also shows that at approximately 500 of 900 (55%) meetings that either wallet-sized cards, the informational letter, or both were distributed to the audience. Finally, the report shows that over 8 million wallet-sized cards have been distributed, and over 100 articles have been placed in user and industry publications over the last 9 months. In short, the Industry Team

²³1998 Activity Report at 3.

continues to undertake substantive and effective outreach efforts, using text and hands on presentations to communicate the features of the Alternative Plan.

3. National Outreach Efforts

The Industry Team incorporated all of CAN's suggestions except the third. The Industry Team did not believe it was the appropriate body to undertake a national outreach campaign. The Industry Team was established at Commission direction as an informal working group. The members of the team work for different companies that directly compete with each other. The educational efforts of the Industry Team have taken place primarily through the outreach procedures already established through the activities of each relay center/carrier. Each carrier has been reluctant to undertake any activity that might benefit its competition. This can occur, even with a neutral message, since some carriers have more TRS contracts than others do. There has been a modest pooling of resources to develop the wallet-sized cards and defray expenses for the Industry Team booth at regional and national conferences. These efforts at pooling have been possible because pooled efforts were infrequent and of modest scale.

However, CAN and other consumers now contemplate a major national outreach effort for the Alternative Plan, an outreach effort that has not been contemplated by the Commission prior to its March 2000 Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on TRS Outreach.²⁴ The Commission has never before required carriers that compete with each other to provide generic consumer information. The Truth in Billing Orders adopted principles and guidelines so that consumers could make informed choices. But the Commission did not require identical formats.

²⁴Telecommunications Relay Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Released, March 6, 2000.

More significantly, the Commission also did not mandate carriers to pool outreach efforts to improve consumer awareness of available choices.²⁵

A national, generic outreach effort will ensure that the Alternative Plan is functionally equivalent to coin sent-paid calling to TRS centers from payphones. If it is decided that such an outreach effort should be undertaken, it should be done by some entity other than the Industry Team. Every member of the Industry Team supported the idea of a nationally funded outreach effort that would include information about the Alternative Plan, as well as other aspects of TRS service, and disability access in general.²⁶

C. Consumer Awareness

The Alternative Plan relies on non-coin payment methods to place relay calls from payphones. Local calls are free, so a consumer has no need to be aware of and use a pre-paid or calling card. A consumer wishing to make a local TRS call from a payphone will be able to complete such a call regardless of their awareness of the Alternative Plan. TRS toll calls from payphones do require a non-coin payment method, so consumer awareness of non-coin payment methods of placing TRS toll calls from payphones is important.

Carriers spend considerable money and effort advertising the availability of services based on non-coin methods of making toll calls, including pre-paid cards, calling cards, dial around calling, and wireless calling. These services are all substitutes for coin sent-paid toll calls from payphones. Their prevalence is a good indicator of the awareness persons with speech and

²⁵In the Matter of Truth in Billing and Billing Format, First Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket No. 98-170, Released May 11, 1999.

²⁶See Comments of WorldCom, GTE, AT&T in Telecommunications Relay Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, CC Docket No. 90-571, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Released, March 6, 2000.

hearing disabilities would have of non-coin methods of placing toll calls from payphones. The data show that consumers have a very high awareness of non-coin methods of placing toll calls. In the 18-Month Report, data submitted by the Industry Team show that in 1996, coin sent-paid toll from payphones accounted for no more than 17% of all toll payphone calls.²⁷ The incidence of coin sent-paid toll calls as a share of toll calls placed away from home was much less however, since the data do not include pre-paid calling cards, dial around calling, or wireless calling. Since the 18-Month Report, coin sent-paid toll calls away from home have significantly declined. WorldCom has collected data of toll calls made from its payphones, and reports that no more than 4% of toll calls were coin sent-paid. Other Industry Team members report data that confirm the general decline in coin sent-paid calling. For example, GTE reports that over a two year period, from 1Q 1998 to 1Q 2000 its coin sent-paid revenues declined 22%. AT&T reports annual declines of 30% in coin sent-paid revenues from 1Q 1997 to 1Q 2000. Publicly traded independent payphone service providers also report a decline of coin sent-paid calls of 13% between 1999 and 2000. In addition, these companies report an annual average decline of coin revenue of about 22% since 1998.

All the more recent data exclude dial-around toll calling, pre-paid card toll calling, and wireless toll calling, just as these types of calls were excluded from the 1996 data presented in the 18-Month Report. Since 1996, pre-paid, dial around and wireless toll calling have increased dramatically. Dial around calling has increased from a revenue base of \$96 million in 1993 to \$3 billion in 1999 — a 30 fold increase.²⁸ Pre-paid calling cards have increased from a revenue base

²⁷ 18-Month Report, Attachment 2, Page 3 of 3.

²⁸ Crain's Chicago Business, "Take a Number, Please: Quiz on Dial-around Firms"; April 5, 1999.

of \$40 million in 1993 to \$6 billion in 2000, a 150 fold increase.²⁹ Pre-paid wireless calling is expected to increase from a revenue base of \$2 billion in 1999 to \$13 billion by 2002.³⁰ Finally, wireless toll revenue has increased from a revenue base of \$6.7 million in 1992 to \$30 million in 1997 — a 4 fold increase.³¹ Consequently, the decline in coin sent-paid toll calling since 1996 is even more dramatic than the reported 17 to 4% decline. In short, consumer awareness and use of non-coin toll services is extremely high.

IX. Conclusion

Since 1997, the Commission has acknowledged that coin sent-paid dialing from payphones to relay centers is not technically feasible and does not even provide a functionally equivalent service for persons with speech and hearing disabilities. However, the Commission has refrained from permanently relying on the Alternative Plan, on the premise that a new technical solution would eventually develop, and out of concern that persons with speech and hearing disabilities were not sufficiently aware of how to make non-coin sent-paid calls from payphones. Five years after temporarily suspending its coin sent-paid requirements it is certain that a technical solution will not develop. Five years of education by the Industry Team, and the growth in awareness and comfort with non-coin methods of making calls away from home show that persons with speech and hearing disabilities are either aware of non-coin calling, or will easily be made aware if additional education is included in a nationally funded TRS outreach campaign. Therefore, the Industry Team believes the Alternative Plan provides the most technically feasible method of

²⁹The Houston Chronicle, "Creditors Try To Force Chapter 7; Petition says Twister's Debts Total \$29 Million," Business Section, page 1, May 26, 2000.

³⁰The Tampa Tribune, "Public Picks up on Pre-paid Cellular," Business Section, page 1, July 3, 1999.

³¹Table 3, Telecommunications Revenue, 1997, TRS Data.

placing calls to relay centers that is most functionally equivalent to calls the general population would place away from home, and urges the Commission to suspend its coin sent-paid requirement (§ 47 C.F.R. 64.604(a)(3)), determine that the Alternative Plan is in the public interest, and permanently adopt the requirements of the Alternative Plan.

Exhibit 1

Petitions to Adopt Alternative Plan



AUXRELAY@aol.com
05/23/2000 02:29 PM

To: Bill Darcy@NYNEX
cc:
Subject: Coin Relay Plan Outreach

As you know, we handle about 1,500 calls a month from both Voice and TTY users who have questions about Relay Service or problems with their Text Telephones. We will continue to follow your instructions and those of the other telephone companies who are our clients for handling these calls. However, we feel obligated to tell you that we are now encountering a unanimous response from all our contacts regarding the closing message we have been giving about the Coin Relay Plan during the past three years. Our callers were telling us that they were familiar with the plan but now, repeat callers are asking us why we waste their time explaining this four year old plan when every TTY user is already familiar with it. I believe we are now irritating your customers and those of the other telephone companies with our constant reminder of the plan. Do you want us to continue to include mention of this plan on every contact or possibly limit it to only those callers with questions about the plan? I have instructed my people to continue to mention the plan with each contact until we hear differently from you but I strongly suggest that you and the other phones companies consider limiting the outreach to avoid continued irritation of your customers. - -
Jeanette Penree



New York Society for the Deaf

(212) 777- 900 (tty/voice)
(212) 777- 740 (fax)

Executive Offices: 817 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003

www.nysd.org
nydeaf@aol.com

CELEBRATING OVER 85 YEARS OF SERVICE

Pearl I. Johnson, M.A.
Executive Director

May 30, 2000

Mr. William Darcy
NYNEX
158 State Street
Albany, N.Y. 12207

Dear Mr. Darcy:

This letter is in support of all your work and efforts to make the existing Coin Relay Plan a success.

On behalf of the staff and clients that we serve, we urge the FCC to make the current plan a permanent one. Over the past four years, most of our TTY users have become educated on how to use coin phones to make local calls through the Relay Service at no cost and also on how to make toll or long distance calls from pay phones.

Much effort and educational outreach was needed to educate the TTY users and it would be most beneficial for this current plan to become permanent. It works and there appears to be no valid reason for creating a rather plan and having to invest time and effort to re-educate the affected population.

Enough - four years as a temporary plan has shown that this works. Make it permanent now and stop all the repetitious and costly outreach efforts.

Thank you again for all your work. You have created a plan that works and now the FCC should adopt it as the best and permanent solution.

Sincerely,

Joanne M. Ebersbach
Joanne M. Ebersbach
Client Services


UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK

 United Way Helps Here

Interpreter
services

Sign Language
Institute

Adult Basic
Education

Job Placement
Rehabilitation Services

Behavioral Health
& Clinical Services

Berge Deaf
Scholarship Program

Long Island
Service Center

Tanya Towers
Residence

Joseph Blum
Apartments

Harry & Jeanette
Wainberg Residence

Exhibit 2

RFQ for Technical Solution

Summary of Industry Team Request for Quotes (RFQ) Issued for Baudot Coin Signaling Solution

09-01-99

The TRS CSP Industry Team sent letters to main telecommunications research and development companies informing them of the pending issue of an RFQ for baudot coin signaling. Companies included Lucent, Siemens, Nortel, Rockwell and Essential Communications (a consulting company). The letter contained a four (4) page description of the coin relay problem and the need for a Baudot or alternative solution, along with the following time line -

09-01-99 to 10-15-99

Registration period for the RFQ process

10-04-99 to 10-09-99

Q & A period and information provided to registrants

11-15-99

Bid closing deadline

02-15-00

Rejection notice date for RFQ responses not accepted

05-01-00

Acceptance notice date for selected bid winner

All RFQ letters were sent via registered mail to ensure they were received. Only one company formally replied to the RFQ. Siemens responded with a letter on 10-06-99 and stated that they understood the requirements but were not in a position to provide a baudot solution. Additionally, Essential Communications, a consulting company replied that in telephone contacts with numerous small research firms, there was no interest expressed in researching a solution for baudot signaling.

INDUSTRY COIN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

REQUEST FOR QUOTE

The FCC has authorized the Coin Industry Team (CIT) to seek out a technical solution for calls made from coin telephones through the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) where the call is to be paid for in coins, not calling cards. The Coin Industry Team, which includes all major Long Distance Companies, all Local Telephone Companies, all Coin Telephone Providers and all TRS Providers is seeking a technical solution and price to resolve this problem.

BACKGROUND

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) has been serving the Deaf, Speech Impaired and Hard of Hearing community in providing telephone service to connect these groups with any telephone user who is not impaired. This is done by dialing an 800 number to connect to the TRS Center for your State and receive assistance from a TRS Communications Assistant (CA). The CA talks to the Hearing party and types to the Deaf party through their Text Telephone (TTY).

Approximately 30 million calls are sent via Relay every year with no problem. Relay customers are billed via their local or long distance company for toll calls just as if the calls were made direct from their home or office. There is no charge for the TRS service itself. All types of calls are accommodated including Calling Card, Collect, Third Party etc. The only type of call that poses a problem for TRS is a Coin Sent Paid (CSP) call from any coin telephone.

In a normal CSP call, the call is rated by the local or LD company and a mechanical voice or live operator comes back with instructions to deposit the required amount of coins for a specified period of time.

With a mechanical voice or a live operator, the TTY user at the coin phone has no way of knowing how many coins are required.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS RFQ

A Baudot signal of the Coin Deposit requirement must be made available to the TTY so that caller will know how much to deposit for the initial call and any subsequent amounts for overtime on the call.

Baudot signaling is a 45 Baud transmission of mixed tones representing the letters of the alphabet and the numbers 0 thru 9. It is a standard TTY transmission signal that has been used by Tele-typewriters since 1895.

There are no options closed to provision of this requirement. The Baudot signal can be a conversion of the "Voice" normally heard by a standard user of the coin phone or it can be a Baudot Signal generated by the CA or the Operator who rates the call. Solutions can be either Network based, based at the TRS Center or at the Coin Instrument, or TTY units built into many Coin Telephones.

The only requirement for this solution is that calls made from coin telephones can continue to be made by Non TTY users but include any TTY user either by changing existing coin signaling, or adding new technology to permit TTY users to see a Baudot message for their coin deposit requirements.

INTERIM SOLUTION

An interim solution has been used for this problem for the past three years. That solution permits coin phone calls from a TTY user to route via their serving TRS Center and use a standard Calling Card to pay for any Toll charges. The Calling Card costs are billed at the existing coin rate or less for these calls, and all local calls are free.

The FCC is reviewing this Interim solution as a permanent fix but would prefer that a technical solution be provided so that these calls would have closer parity with similar calls made by hearing customers who use coin phones.

The CIT is ready to review and assess any solution, in reply to this RFQ, which appears to meet the open technical requirements. CIT expects any replies to be clear in what they can or can not do in filling the requirements. All replies should contain a brief non technical description followed by a technical description, a cost estimate and a time frame for preparing a prototype. All replies will be handled in absolute confidence and no material will be shared between any of the respondents, the telephone companies or the FCC with the exception of a reply which may be accepted by the CIT as a potential solution.

REVIEW TEAM

Only a select sub committee of CIT members will be involved in review of any material contained in replies to this RFQ.

RFQ REQUIREMENTS

If your company decides to reply to this RFQ, the reply should be on file with the CIT by November 15, 1999. No guarantee of award is made in this request. However, if a technical solution at a reasonable price is accepted, and approved by the Industry and the FCC, an award is expected.

Include your company name and the name, telephone number and Fax number of your contact person.

RFQ ADDRESS

Send your reply with eight (8) copies by 11-15-99, to:

Auxiliary Relay Service
1 Pulver Blvd.
Wilton, NY 12831

REGISTRATION AND QUESTIONS

If your company plans to respond to this RFQ, you can register your intention with a simple letter of your plans. Once registered, you will receive copies of any updates to the RFQ, including answers to questions generated by your company or other companies involved in this process. All questions and replies must be sent via Fax.

Questions regarding this RFQ can be Faxed to 518 583 5054. All questions will be submitted and answered by Fax and will have copies sent to every registrant to the RFQ. All questions must be submitted between 10-04-99 and 10-9-99. No questions submitted after 5PM EST on 10-09-99 will be answered.

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

Following the bid closing date of 11-15-99, Ninety (90) days will be used by the CIT to evaluate the replies. If a potential winner is identified, CIT will then inform the FCC of its findings and seek approval from them before announcing a bid winner. This will delay any possible bid award until May 1, 2000. A reply will be issued by 02-15-00 to all respondents whose bid was not accepted by the CIT.

Upon acceptance of any proposal by the CIT and FCC, tests will be ordered to determine if the solution works in a TEST AREA for Relay Coin calls. If tests are successful, and the user community and FCC is satisfied, orders will be issued to the winning bidder.

ORDERS FOR A WINNING BID

Orders for a winning bid will come from that portion of the Industry responsible for service. As an example, if the solution is TRS based, the order will come from a TRS Provider. If the order is LEC or IEC based, orders will come from that area of the industry. If the solution is Coin Phone or TTY based, orders will come from the companies responsible.

RFQ OWNERSHIP

This RFQ is issued by the Coin Industry Subcommittee of the CIT. Administrative questions can be directed to William J. Darcy, a committee member and chair of the Technical Sub Committee. He can be reached on (518-396-1043). Administration of this RFQ will be handled by Auxiliary Relay Service (ARS), a Relay Outreach and Customer training company. ARS is not associated with any Relay Provider, Telephone Company, Long Distance Company or Coin Provider.